

Message Text

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12

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9414

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMCONSUL TANGIER

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 3006

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS MO AG LY SY

SUBJECT: KENITRA TRIAL

REF: RABAT 2896

1. FIRST WEEK OF KENITRA TRIAL ENDED JUNE 29 WITH THREE ACCUSED, MOHAMED AL MOATADI, OMAR KAHKOUN, AND MUSTAPHA EL YOUSSEF HAVING ADMITTED PARTICIPATING IN VARYING DEGREES IN ACTIVITY OF CASABLANCA-BASED URBAN TERRORIST CELL, FINANCED AND INSPIRED FROM ABROAD BY MOHAMED EL BASRI. AMONG GROUP'S ACTIVITIES WAS PLANTING OF FOUR BOMBS, THREE AGAINST US TARGETS.

2. AL MOHTADI, WHO BY HIS TESTIMONY HAD SUBALTERN ROLE IN CELL TO OMAR DAHKOUN, CALLED FIRST BY PROSECUTION. HE ADMITTED HAVING HELPED MAKE FOUR BOMBS, BUT SAID HE KNEW THEY WOULD NOT EXPLODE, AS FUSES WERE OF INSUFFICIENT POWER TO DETONATE THEM. HE HAS ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE OF BOMBS AT PALESTINIAN TRAINING CAMP IN SYRIA WHERE EL BASRI HAD SENT HIM IN 1969. AL MOHTADI'S
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TESTIMONY HAD EFFECT OF FINGERING DAHKOUN, WHO WAS SENTENCED

IN ABSENTIA TO 20 YEARS IN PRISON AT 1971 MARRAKESH TRIAN, AS LEADER OF CELL. IN HIS TESTIMONY, DAHKOUN SAID HE HAD CONTACTS WITH EL BASRI DATING BACK TO 1966, WHEN LATTER ASKED HIM TO TRAVEL TO ALGERIA TO MAKE CONTACT WITH MOROCCAN DISSIDENTS THERE. SINCE 1969 HE HAD LIVED CLANDESTINE EXISTENCE, OCCASIONALLY TRAVELLING IN AND OUT OF ALGERIA USING FALSE PAPERS GIVEN HIM BY EL BASRI. DAHKOUN ADMITTED HAVING MADE FOUR BOMBS, TOGETHER WITH M'BAREK BOUTARKA, AN APPRENTICE LAWYER WHO UNTIL RECENTLY WAS EMPLOY BY ABDERRAHIM BOUABID, AND WHO IS NOW IN FLIGHT. DAHKOUN SAID IT HAD BEEN BOUTERKA'S IDEA TO PLANT FOURTH BOMB IN CROWDED MOHAMED V THEATER IN RABAT. DAHKOUN HAD HIMSELF CHOSEN THREE OTHER SITES: USIS IN RABAT, AND DAR AMERICA LANGUAGE CENTER AND JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER IN CASABLANCA. MOHTADI, WHO DID THE PLANTING, SAYS HE CHANGED LAST SITE TO CONGEN CASA VEHICLE BECAUSE THERE WERE TOO MANY PEOPLE AROUND JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER. TESTIMONY OF THIRD ACCUSED, EL YOUSSEF ADDS LITTLE TO THAT OF OTHERS, AS HE DENIED MOST OF CHARGES AGAINST HIM AND SAID PRIOR ADMISSIONS HAD BEEN FORCED FROM HIM BY TORTURE.

3. COMMENT: OF NOTE IN TESTIMONY SO FAR IS USE EL BASRI'S GROUP IS SAID TO HAVE MADE OF ALGERIAN TERRITORY, AND ITS ABILITY TO MOVE WEAPONS ACROSS THE BORDER (THROUGH FIGUIG AND AHMIR) WITHOUT BEING CAUGHT. LIBYA THUS FAR NOT MENTIONED IN TESTIMONY. ALSO OF INTEREST IS DAHKOUN'S JUSTIFICATION OF HIS ACTIONS BY SAYING THEY WERE DIRECTED AGAINST "ZIONISM AND IMPERIALISM." DAHKOUN CLAIMED THAT US INTELLIGENCE TRIED TO ARRANGE FATAL CAR ACCIDENT FOR MEHDI BENBARKA IN 1963. HE BLAMES BEN BARKA KIDNAPPING ON "AMERICANS, ZIONISTS, WITH COMPLICITY OF GENERAL OUFKIR." ALTHOUGH HIS GUERRILLA TRAINING IN ALGERIA AND SYRIA HAD BEEN INTENDED TO FIT HIM TO FIGHT ON PALESTINIAN FRONT, HE HAD DECIDED INSTEAD TO DIRECT HIS ACTIVITY AGAINST "ZIONIST" INTERESTS IN MOROCCO. IN HIS MIND, THESE OBVIOUSLY INCLUDED US INSTALLATIONS. WHAT SEEMS FROM TESTIMONY TO HAVE BEEN DEEP INVOLVEMENT OF CLOSE COLLABORATOR OF ABDERRAHIM BOUABID IN TERRORISM IS FURTHER BLOW TO BOUABID'S POSITION AS A LEADER OF LEGAL OPPOSITION.

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4. DRAMATIC END TO FOURTH DAY'S TESTIMONY CAME WHEN, AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF QUESTIONING, DAHKOUN LAUNCHED INTO DESCRIPTION OF TORTURES HE SAID HE HAD SUBMITTED AT HANDS OF MAN HE SAYS WAS COL. AHMED DLIMI. AS REPORTED IN OPPOSITION PRESS, DAHKOUN MANAGED TO SAY THAT HE HAD BEEN BURNED BY CIGARETTES AND FORCED TO SWALLOW CLEANING FLUID BEFORE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR AND CHIEF JUDGE INTERRUPTED HIM AND RECESSED COURT.

ROCKWELL

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